

Our Flag



OBJECTIVES:

- To appreciate what the United States flag symbolizes.
- To learn to respect our flag.

GROUP SIZE:

6 to 8 children per adult volunteer.

TIME FRAME:

This lesson is designed for a group meeting between 30 and 60 minutes.

BACKGROUND:

Help children learn about our country's most important symbol, the American flag. Help develop respect for our flag by teaching customs associated with it and proper flag etiquette. Encourage a sense of pride and patriotism by having the children listen to patriotic music and by marching in their own parade.

LIFE SKILL AREAS

Social skills will be developed through group games and discussions. Fine motor skills and eye-hand coordination will be developed through the use of scissors and the group games. Large motor skills will be developed by participation in games and in the marching band.


HELPS TO THE VOLUNTEERS

Try these suggestions.

- Choose one or two of the following activities from each section.
- Try to create appropriate atmosphere by decorating the room with posters and props, using costumes related to the activity, pre-meeting preparation by the 4-H members, thinking about special seating arrangements, and playing background music.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES:

I. GETTING STARTED

 **ACTIVITY:** "Patriotic I Spy" (7 - 9 minutes)

Grade Level: K - 3

Materials: a small American flag placed in the room inconspicuously.

Invite the children to play a game of "I Spy." Give hints such as:

- You can find me inside or outside.
- I can fly.
- I have stars and stripes.
- I am in parades.
- I am red, white, and blue.


After the children have discovered the flag, ask them these questions:

- Can you name some places you've see flags fly?
- Why do we have flags?
- Can you name some holidays that flags are flown on?
- What are ways people respect the flag?

Share these interesting facts about the flag with the children:

- Each color represents something: red stands for hardiness and courage; white stands for purity and innocence; and, blue stands for vigilance, perseverance, and justice.
- Each of the stars stands for one of the 50 states.
- Each stripe stands for one of the original 13 colonies.
- American flags should never touch the ground.
- June 14th is Flag Day; that's when our flag was adopted.
- Flags shouldn't fly in bad weather, or at night unless they have a spotlight on them.
- The American flag is over 200 years old!

Application: Ask the children to look throughout their community for American flags being displayed.

 **ACTIVITY:** "The Pledge of Allegiance" (5 - 7 minutes)

Grade Level: K - 3

Materials: an American flag, a posterboard with the words to the pledge on it.

Explain to the group that a pledge is like a promise. When you pledge your allegiance, or loyalty to the flag, that means you are making a promise to your country. Show the children how to put their right hand over their hearts. Help them recite the pledge:

I pledge allegiance to the flag
Of the United States of America
And to the Republic for which it stands,
One Nation, under God, indivisible
With liberty and justice for all.

Remind the children that showing respect for the flag is important.

Application: Ask the children to look at people the next time they are in a group saying the Pledge of Allegiance. People in military uniforms will salute the flag and men will remove their hats out of respect for the flag.



ACTIVITY: "The 4-H Pledge" (3 - 5 minutes)

Grade Level: K - 3

Materials: a poster board with the 4-H pledge printed on it.

Remind the children that a pledge is like a promise. Just as the Pledge of Allegiance is a promise to our country, the 4-H pledge is a promise to our club, community, country, and to our world. Help them learn the 4-H pledge by reciting it with them:

I pledge:	
My head to clearer thinking,	(right hand points to forehead)
My heart to greater loyalty,	(right hand over heart)
My hands to larger service,	(arms slightly bent, palms up)
And my health to better living.	(arms at sides)
For my club, my community, my country, and my world.	

Application: Encourage the children to think of ways to fulfill these promises every day.

ACTIVITY: Make Your Own "Old Glory" (5 - 7 minutes)

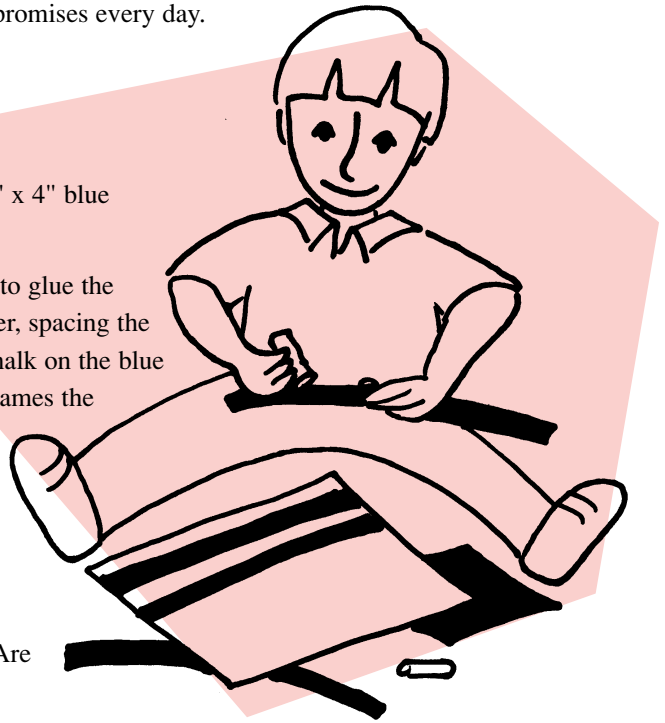
Grade Level: K - 3

Materials: red, white, and blue construction paper: 5/8" red strips, 5" x 4" blue rectangle, and white for the base, scissors, glue, and white chalk.

Encourage the children to make a flag of their own. Show them how to glue the blue corner on and a red stripe at the top and bottom of the white paper, spacing the last five stripes evenly in the middle. Let them make stars with the chalk on the blue paper. As the children work, play patriotic music and talk about the names the flag is known by: "Old Glory," the "Star Spangled Banner," and the "Stars and Stripes."

Note to the Volunteer: Have the children make an extra flag to use in the Art Exhibit and Cloverbud Display lessons in the subject area of Community / Expressive Arts.

Application: Ask the children to examine an American flag closely. Are the colors printed on one piece of fabric or are separate pieces sewn together?



II. DIGGING DEEPER

ACTIVITY: Let's Sing "Yankee Doodle" (5 - 7 minutes)

Grade Level: K - 3

Materials: none.

Have the children sit on the floor in a circle with their legs crossed. Each child's knees should be touching their neighbor's knees. Practice singing the song through once. Add actions by slapping your own knees, on the first syllable of "Yankee," your right knee and your neighbor's left knee on the second syllable, back to your own knees on the first syllable of "Doodle" and your left knee and your neighbor's right knee on the second syllable. Repeat the same sequence for each syllable of each word of the song. Start slowly and gradually build speed. You'll have a dandy time!

Yankee Doodle

Yankee Doodle went to London
 Just to ride a pony.
 Stuck a feather in his cap
 And called it macaroni.

Yankee Doodle keep it up,
 Yankee Doodle Dandee.
 Mind the music and your step
 And with the girls be handy.



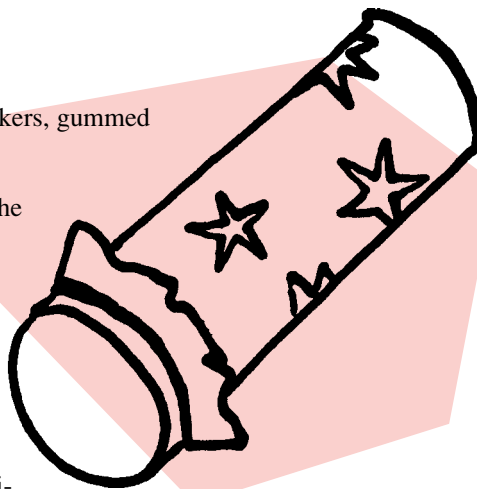
Application: Encourage the children to be aware of other patriotic songs they hear. What are they and when are they sung?

✻ **ACTIVITY:** "Making Kazoos" (10 - 12 minutes)

Grade Level: K - 3

Materials: empty toilet paper rolls, rubber bands, wax paper, markers, gummed stars.

Show the children how to assemble their own kazoos by folding the wax paper several times so that it covers the end of the paper roll. Rubber band it in place. Encourage the children to decorate their kazoos with the markers and stars. Test the kazoos. Place the end of the roll lightly to your mouth and hum or sing. The vibration of the layers of wax paper should make your kazoos sound great!



Application: Ask the children to look at marching bands on television, a parade, or a local sporting event. What kinds of instruments do these musicians play?

✻ **ACTIVITY:** "Patriotic Marching Band" (7- 9 minutes)

Grade Level: K - 3

Materials: a record or tape player, recordings of patriotic marches, kazoos, and an American flag.

Ask the children if they've ever seen a marching band. What do the musicians do? Help the children organize their own marching band. Select a child to carry the flag and to lead the parade. Have each child grab their kazoo, put on the music, and strike up the band! Encourage the children to hum to the music through their kazoos as they march. Let the children take turns being the leader.

Application: Ask the children to listen for patriotic music. Do they recognize any of the tunes? Is it "marching music?"

III. LOOKING WITHIN

✻ **ACTIVITY:** "American Flag Seek and Find" (5 - 7 minutes)

Grade Level: K - 3

Materials: reproduced Seek and Find puzzles.

CAN YOU FIND IT?

Look from left to right and up and down to see if you can find these words:


RED
WHITE
BLUE

FLAG
AMERICAN
RESPECT

STARS
STRIPES
PLEDGE

O	W	R	E	S	P	E	C	T	M	R
S	W	H	I	T	E	M	J	F	B	C
T	D	U	Z	R	D	P	B	L	U	E
A	M	E	R	I	C	A	N	A	V	P
R	F	X	O	P	Q	N	W	G	G	U
S	Y	C	R	E	D	X	Y	O	B	T
A	B	S	R	S	P	L	E	D	G	E

IV. BRINGING CLOSURE

 **ACTIVITY:** "Folding the Flag" (7- 9 minutes)

Grade Level: K - 3

Materials: a large American flag.

Help develop respect for the flag by teaching the children how to do a military fold when putting the flag away. Hold end of the flag; fold it lengthwise two times to make a long strip. Starting at the striped end, fold it into triangles, over and over until it is folded into a triangular shape. Tuck the edge in if needed. Help the children as they go along, reminding them to handle the flag with care and respect. Let each child have an opportunity to fold the flag.

Application: Ask the children to observe how people in their community take down their flags. Do they use a military fold? Where do they keep their flag?

